

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph at page 11, lines 4-17 with the following paragraph:

From the above description, it can be appreciated that the present invention enables an encryption algorithm to be located in a central location, even when it is intended for use in connection with a number of distributed computers or communications devices 124 interconnected to one another by a computer network, such as a LAN 112. Accordingly, copies of the encryption algorithm does not need to be distributed to individual communications devices 124. The maintenance of the security algorithm in a central location provides improved system security by limiting the access of would be hackers to the code used to implement the encryption algorithm. In addition, the maintenance of the encryption algorithm in a central location, such as the security server 120, allows alterations to that algorithm to be made, without requiring changes to the software stored on individual communications devices 124. A method that includes altering the encryption algorithm may comprise altering the encryption algorithm in the security server. In addition, the method may include altering the decryption algorithm in the communications server to correspond to the altered encryption algorithm in the security server. Accordingly, a token passed to the security server by the first communications device and encrypted by the security server using the altered encryption algorithm and the identifying information entered at the first communications device can be decrypted by the communications server using the altered decryption algorithm. Also, the communications devices 124 are not required to implement the encryption algorithm, allowing stronger encryption algorithms than may otherwise be possible using the limited resources of certain communications devices 124 to be used.